

# DEVELOPING THE NAVY'S OPERATIONAL LEADERS

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## A Critical Look

*Commander Christopher D. Hayes, U.S. Navy*

*Everything starts and ends with leadership. Nothing else we accomplish, no other priority we pursue, is of much consequence if we do not have sound and effective leadership in place to enact it. We all have a responsibility to develop our own leadership potential and that of the Sailors.*

ADMIRAL MICHAEL G. MULLEN, CNO GUIDANCE FOR 2006

Admiral Mullen's words accurately reflect the Navy's traditional pronouncement on leadership. Yet for most of the past century the Navy has struggled to define formally and institutionalize its development process for naval leaders. Just as the Navy accepts that "everything starts and ends with leadership," it comfortably assumes that leadership "just happens," as a natural derivative of operational assignments. More than ninety studies, reviews, and boards have examined the Navy's officer leadership, training, and education practices, in a continuing effort to produce an enduring and integrated system of officer development.<sup>1</sup> Nevertheless, the Navy has been unable to reconcile the symbiotic relationship among training, education, and experience, and this inability has left it unprepared to meet the challenges inherent in the vision of the Chief of Naval Operations (CNO) to "develop 21st century leaders."<sup>2</sup>

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The Navy's concept of an officer's development continuum traditionally culminated in promotion to flag rank and the command of battle groups—the pinnacle of naval leadership, exercised in a naval context.<sup>3</sup> Today, operational leadership at flag rank demands much more. Twenty-first-century operational leadership is synonymous with joint leadership. Further, as aptly stated by Admiral Mullen, "The future of national and international security relies on the interoperability and cooperation among the services, the interagency, international partners and non-government organizations. . . . But

Report Documentation Page			Form Approved OMB No. 0704-0188		
Public reporting burden for the collection of information is estimated to average 1 hour per response, including the time for reviewing instructions, searching existing data sources, gathering and maintaining the data needed, and completing and reviewing the collection of information. Send comments regarding this burden estimate or any other aspect of this collection of information, including suggestions for reducing this burden, to Washington Headquarters Services, Directorate for Information Operations and Reports, 1215 Jefferson Davis Highway, Suite 1204, Arlington VA 22202-4302. Respondents should be aware that notwithstanding any other provision of law, no person shall be subject to a penalty for failing to comply with a collection of information if it does not display a currently valid OMB control number.					
1. REPORT DATE <b>2008</b>	2. REPORT TYPE		3. DATES COVERED <b>00-00-2008 to 00-00-2008</b>		
4. TITLE AND SUBTITLE <b>Developing the Navy's Operational Leaders: A Critical Look</b>			5a. CONTRACT NUMBER		
			5b. GRANT NUMBER		
			5c. PROGRAM ELEMENT NUMBER		
6. AUTHOR(S)			5d. PROJECT NUMBER		
			5e. TASK NUMBER		
			5f. WORK UNIT NUMBER		
7. PERFORMING ORGANIZATION NAME(S) AND ADDRESS(ES) <b>Naval War College, 686 Cushing Road, Newport, RI, 02841-1207</b>			8. PERFORMING ORGANIZATION REPORT NUMBER		
9. SPONSORING/MONITORING AGENCY NAME(S) AND ADDRESS(ES)			10. SPONSOR/MONITOR'S ACRONYM(S)		
			11. SPONSOR/MONITOR'S REPORT NUMBER(S)		
12. DISTRIBUTION/AVAILABILITY STATEMENT <b>Approved for public release; distribution unlimited</b>					
13. SUPPLEMENTARY NOTES					
14. ABSTRACT					
15. SUBJECT TERMS					
16. SECURITY CLASSIFICATION OF:			17. LIMITATION OF ABSTRACT <b>Same as Report (SAR)</b>	18. NUMBER OF PAGES <b>32</b>	19a. NAME OF RESPONSIBLE PERSON
a. REPORT <b>unclassified</b>	b. ABSTRACT <b>unclassified</b>	c. THIS PAGE <b>unclassified</b>			

*we* are only as good as the contribution *we* make to the overall effort.”<sup>4</sup> The Navy’s greatest challenge, and one of Admiral Mullen’s enduring top three priorities in his tenure as CNO, is to cultivate leaders prepared to meet the challenges inherent in the twenty-first-century security environment.

Admiral Mullen articulated his vision of “joint officer development” in a professional military education (PME) continuum designed to develop naval leaders. The continuum defines distinct blocks of education broadly aligned with officer career progression from pay grade O-1 to O-9.\* The key elements of the PME system are “leadership, professionalism, military studies including naval and joint warfare, and national, maritime, and global security.”<sup>5</sup> The CNO’s emphasis on formal officer development, coupled with alignment of the Navy’s manpower, personnel, training, and education domains into an “MPTE Domain,” suggests that the Navy is primed to address the challenges at hand in a meaningful way. However, as evidenced by the scores of similar initiatives over the past thirty years, unless there is an enduring change in doctrine and Navy culture, there is little prospect for success. The Chief of Naval Personnel (CNP), like the CNO, has articulated a plan for producing leaders.<sup>6</sup> However, if the disparate organizations and processes responsible for essential portions of the PME continuum are not aligned, the proposed programs will likely suffer the same fate as the “Covenant Leadership,” “Leadership and Management Education and Training,” and “Total Quality Leadership” of decades past. Leadership development is inextricably wed to training and education. As the Navy moves forward to execute its vision, leadership must be integrated into the PME curriculum and not be left to languish on its own. Further, the Navy must focus on intraservice officer development before it can fully realize effective operational leadership in an interservice joint operating environment.

Unless tied to an integrated system linking assessment, career management, and advancement selection criteria, initiatives to reform the Navy’s processes will fall out of favor as the helm is passed to the next cohort of Navy leaders. Real, enduring change is required to meet the challenges of twenty-first-century leadership. Change of this magnitude requires systematic execution and incurs significant risk. In the absence of execution, vision, no matter how well articulated or intended, amounts to little more than grandiloquence.

## OPERATIONAL LEADERSHIP

The security environment of the twenty-first century presents new challenges and places unprecedented demands on leadership. The complexity of the battle space, the speed of change, and the cognitive demands of integrated information

\* The Navy’s officer pay grades are O-1, ensign; O-2, lieutenant (junior grade); O-3, lieutenant; O-4, lieutenant commander; O-5, commander; O-6, captain; O-7, rear admiral (lower half); O-8, rear admiral (upper half); O-9, vice admiral; and O-10, admiral.

networks all conspire to burden leadership in ways inconceivable less than a generation ago. In the wake of the Cold War, the lid has been lifted from long-simmering regional tensions. The fluidity of asymmetric warfare and adaptive application of technology have conspired to alter dramatically traditional notions of state-to-state conflict. America's strategic buffer zone has been largely eliminated by the advent of globalization and the proliferation of affordable technology. The role of the United States in the world is different than at any other point in history.

Moreover, the roles that American forces are compelled to accept abroad are increasingly complex, multicultural, joint, and interagency in nature. Even a cursory review of recent engagements illustrates this point: combat operations in Iraq and Afghanistan; missions in Bosnia, Somalia, and Kosovo; antipiracy and maritime interdiction operations in the southwestern Pacific and Horn of Africa; humanitarian relief operations in Indonesia and Pakistan; and noncombatant evacuation operations in the eastern Mediterranean. These operations reflect a disparate array of nontraditional missions in complicated operating environments. All pose operational challenges that the Navy's current system does not adequately prepare its leaders to meet.

#### LEADERSHIP VERSUS OPERATIONAL COMPETENCY

The term *operational leadership* implicitly requires the confluence of two discrete concepts. Operational leadership is leadership exercised at the operational level, requiring both leadership and operational competency. There is a subtle but powerful distinction between the two. Operational competency requires mastery of the tactical domain and a deft understanding of the strategic. A recent working definition of operational leadership, tacitly endorsed by 107 flag and general officers with operational leadership experience, reads: "The art of direct and indirect influence—both internal and external to the organization—based on a common vision that builds unity of effort while employing tactical activities and capabilities to achieve strategic objectives."<sup>7</sup> In the twenty-first-century context, as described by the *Capstone Concept for Joint Operations* (CCJO), operational functions are inherently joint.<sup>8</sup> Nonetheless, the concept of jointness in itself has been described as inadequately reflecting the complexity of current operations and those of the foreseeable future. The term *joint* is evolving to imply "the integrated employment of . . . multinational armed forces and interagency capabilities" and the conduct of operations in a "multi-Service, multi-agency, multi-national environment."<sup>9</sup> Leadership is expected to synthesize integration of actions so as to realize cumulative effects greater than those achievable by the individual actors. Creating a comprehensive almanac of joint leader requirements is therefore a

challenging endeavor, but it is under way in earnest across the services and within joint institutions.

Ultimately, joint leaders must be prepared to engage and execute with agility the innumerable and complex tasks demanded by the joint operational environment. They must be thoroughly competent in the execution of military affairs at the operational level. More than that, they must be operationally competent *leaders*. It is perhaps easier to focus on what a battle space looks like, who the actors are, and which sequence of tactical actions would best produce strategic objectives than on the seemingly pedantic concept of leadership.

Leadership is required regardless of the nature of the endeavor; whether at the tactical, operational, or strategic level, leadership is the common essential ingredient. The uniqueness of each situational context seems to make it possible to enumerate mechanically the demands of leadership as series of didactic competency lists. Who the leaders are and how they execute the art of leading are more vexing subjects.

If cultivating operational leaders requires development of both operational competency and leadership, however, the Navy's current strategy for joint leader development is misaligned. Admiral Mullen has declared, "The Navy's PME Continuum provides a systematic way to develop leaders."<sup>10</sup> This is accurate, to the extent the proposed PME continuum depicts an institutional approach to identifying opportunities for service and joint professional military education in accordance with joint officer-development doctrine. However, the proposed continuum attends to only one of the four required pillars—joint professional military education (JPME).<sup>11</sup> It falls short of fully realizing the need to develop leaders, not just officers educated in joint operating concepts. It fails to demonstrate the Navy's comprehension that systematically developing leaders requires systematically developing leadership.

## JOINT OFFICER DEVELOPMENT AND THE CCJO

The 2005 Ronald Reagan National Defense Authorization Act formally set in motion a process to develop and execute a plan to manage both joint officer development and joint professional military education. The August 2005 *Capstone Concept for Joint Operations*

describes how future joint forces are expected to operate across the range of military operations in 2012–2025 in support of strategic objectives. It applies to operations around the globe conducted unilaterally or in conjunction with multinational military partners and other government and non-government agencies. It envisions military operations conducted within a national strategy that incorporates all instruments of national power.<sup>12</sup>

The CCJO and the subsequent *Vision for Joint Officer Development* (JOD) from the chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff (CJCS) fully articulate the chairman's vision and proposed strategy to achieve the espoused goals. The chairman's guidance sets forth three broad domains of required joint leader competency: "Strategically Minded," "Critical Thinker," and "Skilled Joint Warfighter."<sup>13</sup>

These primary domains lay the groundwork for further exploration and development by the individual services and the Joint Staff itself. In that connection, the Joint Staff J7\* has solicited the assistance of a consulting firm, Caliber Associates.<sup>14</sup> Central to the chairman's plan for creating joint leaders is a commitment to measurement mechanisms that can support quantitative assessment of critical competency-based education as an integral element in "a lifelong continuum of learning."<sup>15</sup> The JOD articulates four interdependent supporting pillars: "Joint Individual Training," "Joint Professional Military Education," "Joint Experience," and "Self-Development."<sup>16</sup>

Recognizing the inherent value of the individual services' warfighting competencies and the Title 10 responsibilities of the service chiefs, the JOD does not expect service-specific officer development to be wholly subordinated to development of joint officers. Rather, it stipulates that the services "adjust their officer development models to fit the new JOD paradigm."<sup>17</sup> This requires a full examination of a service's officer-development continuum and restructuring as necessary to meet the challenges inherent in providing fully qualified, competent, and capable joint officers. The architecture for achieving educational requirements is established in CJCS Instruction 1800.01C, "Officer Professional Military Education Policy" (OPMEP). This comprehensive document promulgates the policies, procedures, and responsibilities for execution and certification of the joint professional military education continuum. It clearly establishes the tiers of education, scope, and focus of each building block, as well as the specific learning objectives required at each stage of the PME continuum.

Specifically focused on the educational institutions that constitute the PME and JPME continua, the intent of the Officer Professional Military Education Program is to foster the growth of organizational learning by regulating the "education needed to complement training, experience, and self-improvement to produce the most professionally competent individual possible."<sup>18</sup> However, it addresses hardly at all the fundamental leadership education required in support of professional development; the subject of leadership is introduced only in appendix D to enclosure E, the service "Senior-Level Colleges (SLC) Joint Learning Areas and Objectives" (JPME Phase I), in this context:

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\*Director for Operational Plans and Joint Force Development.

*Learning Area 6—Joint Strategic Leader Development*

- a. Synthesize techniques for leading in a joint, interagency and multinational environment.
- b. Synthesize leadership skills necessary to sustain innovative, agile and ethical organizations in a joint, interagency and multinational environment.<sup>19</sup>

No leadership learning areas or objectives are prescribed among the precommissioning, primary JPME, or service intermediate-level-college objectives. The chairman's *Vision for Joint Officer Development* is focused on O-6s (colonels and Navy captains), the point in an officer's career where joint and individual-service development converge.<sup>20</sup> It is appropriate that when leadership is first introduced in a required learning area, the objectives are clearly directed at the operational level, as those required of the "joint, interagency and multinational environment."<sup>21</sup> It is implicit in the CCJO and JOD that leadership and execution at the tactical level of military operations are inherently service-oriented endeavors. At the grade of captain or colonel, service leader competencies are assumed; therefore, the obligation to develop "techniques for leading" and the "leadership skills necessary to sustain innovative, agile and ethical organizations" is fundamentally that of the individual service.

Although not specifically required for certification through the OPMEP Process of Accreditation of Joint Education (PAJE), the service colleges are expected to provide leadership education to their students. Ironically, however, the service institutions do not focus conspicuously on leadership education; the only PAJE-certified institution with leadership education as a core element of its curriculum is the Industrial College of the Armed Forces (ICAF), a fundamentally joint establishment within the National Defense University, in Washington, D.C. ICAF instructs leadership as a core course in the syllabus. The stated mission of ICAF's Leadership and Information Strategy Department is to "educate and develop leaders to bring strategic thinking skills and innovative approaches to the challenges of transforming organizations and of formulating and resourcing our future national security strategy."<sup>22</sup> Its syllabus is organized around twenty modules, including a two-part capstone exercise (see figure 1). There is no comparable course or content at the Naval War College or anywhere else in the Navy's PME continuum. At the Naval War College, and apart from the Stockdale Group Advanced Research Project, the newly established College of Naval Leadership has no direct relationship with core courses and no formal role in leadership education at the school. There is no compulsory leadership education in the Naval War College's curriculum; in fact, aside from one module of elective offerings, there is no specific instruction in the subject. Each of the College's three core courses claims to provide leadership education as an integral part of its

curriculum, but learning modules and objectives directed to that end are conspicuously absent.

**FIGURE 1**  
**ICAF SYLLABUS**

1. The Challenge of Strategic Leadership
2. Conceptual Capacity (Mental Models, Reframing and Systems Thinking)
3. Critical Thinking, Assessing Risk and Uncertainty
4. Creative Thinking and Innovation
5. Interpersonal Skills (Social Competence)
6. Managing Decision Making: Strategies for Consensus & Conflict Management
7. Strategic Negotiations
8. Interagency Decision Making Exercise
9. Transformational Leadership and Leading Organizational Change
10. Shaping the International Environment: Organizational Processes and Change
11. Shaping Organizational Culture
12. Leveraging Power and Politics in Organizations
13. Building and Leading Strategic Teams
14. Building and Communicating a Strategic Vision
15. Aligning Vision and Strategy
16. Leading Organizational Change
17. Building a Learning Organization
18. Establishing Organizational Ethics and Values
19. Capstone—Leading Transformation
20. Strategic Leader Challenges

Source: ICAF Strategic Leadership: Leading Transformation and Change in the Information Age, abbreviated syllabus.

### DEFINING THE ROLE OF COMPETENCIES

The term *competency* means, simply, competence and, beyond that, “the state or quality of being competent.” The definition of *competent*, in turn, is “properly or well qualified; capable.” The difficulty of directly defining *competency* is multiplied in the context of a lack of common definition among the services. Not only do the services claim their own definitions of competency, but they apparently consider interchangeable a list of words: competency, skill, characteristic, trait, ability, attitude, etc. Yet each of these has a slightly different connotation, and each requires a unique apprenticeship.

The Navy has long relied on competencies as a tool to frame the discussion of leadership development and subsequent attempts to engineer systematically a process to implement it. Nearly a hundred years ago, early editions of the classic *Command at Sea* enumerated seven competencies under the heading of



“Leadership Training.”<sup>23</sup> The context and notions seem antiquated by today’s standards, yet competency models generated within the past two decades draw striking parallels to these same centuries-old ideals. According to the 1984 edition of *Fundamentals of Naval Leadership*, there are seven essential characteristics of naval leaders. In 1979, the Navy’s Leadership and Management Education Training (LMET) program proclaimed twenty-seven, but by 1992 that number had been revised to sixteen concurrent with the integration of the Navy Leadership Development Program (NAVLEAD), discussed below. The LMET/NAVLEAD curriculums were based on these competency lists and were designed to introduce concepts that students would pursue on their own during their careers.<sup>24</sup> However, while incorporating the LMET/NAVLEAD curriculums into the Surface Warfare Officer School syllabus, the surface community elected to subdivide competencies based on rank and position; thus the division-officer course taught ten competencies, the department-head course thirteen, and the executive-officer and commanding-officer courses covered eleven, characteristics deemed appropriate for senior leaders.<sup>25</sup> In 1995, the Navy reexamined its competency list in light of the operating environment and crafted yet another compilation. Those competencies laid the groundwork for the Navy’s 1996 Officer Development Continuum.<sup>26</sup>

The Navy’s new continuum brought the establishment of the Center for Naval Leadership (CNL) in 2003. The CNL is responsible for generating the new “Navy Leadership Competency Model.” According to the CNL, “a competency is defined as a behavior or set of behaviors that describes excellent performance in a particular work context. These characteristics are applied to provide clarification of standards and expectations. In other words, a competency is what superior performers do more often, with better on the job results.”<sup>27</sup> The new model is built on twenty-five competencies organized into five “core” clusters. Despite claims of “comprehensive research” devoted to this latest model, little is known about the efforts or methodology that went into it; CNL staff members themselves point out a striking resemblance to the Office of Personnel Management’s model for the Senior Executive Service.<sup>28</sup> Further, the CNL’s courses do not teach to these competencies directly and appear to be largely built upon a legacy syllabus, that of Leadership and Management Education Training.<sup>29</sup>

The Navy is certainly not alone in embracing competency models as frameworks for leadership development. Each service has its own lists of competencies, each tracing its own heritage from inception through iterative evolution to the current model. The *Capstone Concept for Joint Operations* firmly establishes competency modeling as the preferred paradigm for leader development. The *Vision for Joint Officer Development* defines a competency as “the higher level of assessing learning outcomes described by specific knowledge, skill, ability, and

attitude (KSAA).”<sup>30</sup> Further, the JOD describes joint leader competencies as the “heart” of officer development. The CCJO directs that the joint officer-development process produce “knowledgeable, empowered, innovative, and decisive leaders, capable of leading the networked joint force to success in fluid and perhaps chaotic operating environments . . . [requiring] more comprehensive knowledge of interagency and multinational cultures and capabilities.”<sup>31</sup> This directive serves as the genesis of the chairman’s commitment to “identify and inculcate a set of joint leader competencies,” and it establishes the impetus for individual services to align leadership development architecture based on competency modeling.

Caliber Associates’ work under the Joint Staff J7 produced a four-month study to determine the competencies required for performance at the joint operational and strategic levels.<sup>32</sup> The methodology included two concurrent, yet distinct, efforts. One was a review of each service’s current leadership model and existing literature on service and joint competency requirements. For the Army, Air Force, Marine Corps, and Coast Guard, the firm examined leadership doctrine and officer-development continua. For the Navy, possessing neither leadership doctrine nor formal process, the researchers relied primarily on the most recent version of the Navy Leadership Competency Model.<sup>33</sup> The researchers then expanded their study to the U.S. Joint Forces Command and Special Operations Command. Caliber Associates then looked for overlaps, correlated service models and core values, and—this was the focus of the endeavor—identified competencies that were distinctly joint, common to all services. The resulting draft model was then refined in interviews with subject matter experts, who, responding to a standard interview protocol, made specific comments and recommendations for improvement.<sup>34</sup> The Caliber study, *Identification of the Competencies Required of Joint Force Leaders*, was completed in February 2006 but has not been formally released or endorsed by the Joint Staff.

## COMPETENCY MODELING

Competency modeling fits well with the military’s systematic approach to problem solving. By thoroughly examining the competencies required for any given event, an analyst can, theoretically, design a system to produce them through training and education. For the military, competency mapping supports a prescriptive methodology for aligning education and training events with measurable results. But if there is value in defining competencies, there is a danger in presuming that every nuance of a function can be reduced to a series of singular descriptors, assigned to a training syllabus, and then mass-produced. Also, the lack of a consistent definition of “competency” and the variety of terms and descriptors mentioned above as used interchangeably with it suggest how

problematic competency mapping would be as the primary driver in leadership development.

The *Vision for Joint Officer Development*, as we have seen, speaks of “assessing learning outcomes described by specific knowledge, skill, ability, and attitude,” but it is difficult to see how methodology applicable to a specific *skill* would produce a desired *attitude*.<sup>35</sup> In the Navy’s view, the new competency model applies wholesale, across the service, regardless of rank, degree of authority, or level of operation. “Leadership is leadership is leadership,” the thinking seems to be—thus the competency model applies equally to every officer and every sailor, all the time.<sup>36</sup> Yet the Navy’s own historical use of competency models indicates the contrary. The continuous, iterative review and updating of naval competencies makes clear both the adaptive, evolutionary nature of leadership requirements and the difficulty of establishing an enduring, comprehensive list.

Computer modeling and learning technologies profess to make competency mapping more reliable, measurable, and predictable; however, competencies themselves represent only one approach to the development of leaders. It may be more instructive to conduct a regressive review of naval competencies, identifying enduring elements common to Navy culture. Relying on these core competencies, one might trace these core competencies through evolving models, in the framework of then-current operational environments. Such a study would likely validate enduring competencies and demonstrate the relationship between the value of competencies and a given situational context.

A 2004 article in the quarterly journal of the U.S. Army War College cautions, “We should be very circumspect of our ability to identify an adequate, much less complete, list of competencies applicable to a rapidly changing operational environment.”<sup>37</sup> Its coauthors develop a thoughtful and sound argument against sole reliance on competency modeling, aptly characterizing competency modeling as a measure of “single loop” learning and advocating instead “double loop” learning within a “multiple lens strategy.”<sup>38</sup>

The argument for a multiple-lens strategy and against competency modeling illustrates a broader point—that elusiveness of a universally accepted prescription for leadership or leader development. The sheer abundance and variety of leadership theories point to the complexity of the subject. Definitions of leadership and the means to develop it are so contentious because leadership itself means different things, in different contexts, to different people. Competency modeling identifies and maps desired end states but does not point to the best methodology for cultivating the qualities they represent. Alone, competency modeling is inadequate to capture or teach the totality of leadership. It is incumbent upon a profession in which everything “starts and ends with leadership” to find a practical way to expose developing

leaders to the full range of leadership resources available. A single solution is not enough.

### LEADERSHIP EDUCATION VERSUS EDUCATING LEADERS

There is a subtle difference between *leadership education* and *educating leaders*. They are complementary, but they are not mutually inclusive. Leadership education is a subordinate element of leadership development. *Leadership education* is instruction in leadership theory, concepts, and models of action. It refers to those elements of a leader's development process designed and provided explicitly to inculcate knowledge in the domain of leadership-specific educational material. The intent of this material is to give individuals an opportunity to examine and learn the various theories, models, concepts, and principles of leadership and a comprehensive exposure to the enormous body of knowledge in the field of leadership research. The objective of this education is to help leaders evaluate their own styles, strengths, weaknesses, preferred situational approaches, etc., so they can develop their own highly personalized ways to exercise the coveted art of leadership. Leadership education should be not prescriptive but rather descriptive of the range and depth of material available to help leaders realize their full potentials. *Educating leaders*, in contrast, includes everything else. Together these endeavors arm individuals with the knowledge and heuristics essential to leadership in unpredictable settings.

The Navy's Center for Naval Leadership and the Industrial College of the Armed Forces' strategic leadership course are examples of leadership education. Yet the difference between them in organizational approach is significant. In the Navy's vision of leadership development, leadership education is a stand-alone process. In ICAF's approach, leadership education is an integral part of a larger effort to educate leaders through the joint officer development program and the professional military education continuum. This is a fundamental tenet of Marine Corps, Air Force, and Army professional development continua. "The Marine Corps," for example, "believes that it is critical to nest its leadership development processes into its overall professional development continuum, which, in turn, is nested in the institution's mission, culture and core values."<sup>39</sup>

### THE CHALLENGE OF NAVY CULTURE

It might be argued that World War II was the single most significant crucible of change for the U.S. Navy in its history. For the 150 years prior to World War II, the Navy had been solidly fixed in a culture of sailors and ships at sea. However, by the war's close the future course of the Navy and naval culture had irreversibly changed. Battleships and surface gunnery engagements no longer represented the foundation of naval doctrine; aircraft carriers and aviation had

emerged to challenge their dominance and tradition. The submarine force too had become prominent, forming a triad of naval culture and power. At the same time, advances in communication technology marked the beginning of a revolution in maritime command and control. The close of the Second World War marked for the Navy the end both of a myopic concept of independent operational command at sea and of a singular core competence of dominance on the sea's surface.

"A ship at sea is a distant world in herself and in consideration of the protracted and distant operations of the fleet units the Navy must place great power, responsibility and trust in the hands of those leaders chosen for command. . . . This is the most difficult and demanding assignment in the Navy."<sup>40</sup> These words, redolent of a romanticized and somewhat antiquated notion of independent command at sea, convey a cultural ethos still prevalent in today's surface community and still very much ingrained in the Navy's subcultures. Over the intervening decades, while the world evolved around it, the service has perpetuated a uniquely naval culture anchored in the notion that commanders on, above, or below the sea are bastions of independence and immune to the prescriptions of doctrine. But all the while, technology and emergent rival subcultures have been insidiously and permanently eroding this fundamental precept of naval service.

The early years of the Cold War marked a subtle but profound shift, the beginning of divergence from a cohesive culture based on the traditional role of the surface combatant. That core competency now had to assimilate growing distinctions among the surface, subsurface, and aviation communities. The ensuing six decades entrenched these subcultures within the Navy; evolution in and attendant demands of technology, in turn, divided subcultures into microcultures. The submarine force fractured, to some extent, between fast attack and ballistic missile forces. Aviation witnessed a proliferation of "stovepipes": fixed-wing aviation divided into patrol, support, and tactical platforms, the latter splitting further into attack (bomber) and fighter communities; similar divisions evolved in the helicopter community, where, like the fixed-wing divisions, splits occurred largely along aircraft-platform lines. Throughout the Cold War, the Navy as a whole fractured and splintered among technical and tactical competencies. Each new community evolved its own language, its own operating doctrine, and its own personnel management priorities. Even in the surface community, whose culture remained largely intact, the pressures and influence of emerging technology and the growing complexity of warfighting systems, sensors, and communications brought significant change to perceptions of command at sea.

At the height of World War II, the Navy had been fully integrated in joint campaigns, supporting combined-force warfare on two oceans. Before that, in the lull between world wars, the Navy placed a premium on leadership education and development. As a result, with rare exceptions, its senior leaders in the Second World War were all graduates of the Naval War College. However, technology and the bipolarity of the Cold War eroded service-college education. Rapidly increasing operational demands forced an emphasis on tactical competency and reinforced the divisions among subcultures. The aviation, surface warfare, and submarine communities looked increasingly inward as they struggled to master the sophisticated hardware that now defined both the fleet's capability and their own respective credibilities. Navy leadership supported and in many cases advocated this fixation.

That the Navy maintained a forward-deployed posture throughout the Cold War further exacerbated the drift from an operational focus and a unifying ship-centric heritage. So paramount were the perceived demands of operating advanced aircraft, complicated surface combatants, and nuclear propulsion systems that the Navy abdicated its responsibility to institutionalize formal officer development and prepare its leadership to meet the joint challenges of the future operational environment. So compelling were the Navy's cultural proclivities and operational tempo that not even the 1986 Goldwater-Nichols Department of Defense Reorganization Act could compel it to look beyond its insular, single-service boundaries. Despite that congressional mandate to engage fully in joint officer development, a full twenty years later only 20 percent of the Navy's flag officers were graduates of a senior service-college resident course.<sup>41</sup> That 80 percent of the Navy's current flag officers are *not* service-college graduates speaks directly to the relative value the Navy places on education, on one hand, and operational assignment, on the other.

## THE NAVY'S ENDURING TRANSFORMATION

*We are holding you [the Naval Aviation Enterprise] up as the poster child for the way things ought to be done. We are encouraged by the progress that you are making.*

ADMIRAL VERN CLARK, MAY 2005

The Navy's recent transformational commitment to institutionalizing an "enterprise" framework perpetuates and solidifies the cultural alignments of the service's warfighting communities.<sup>42</sup> "Our Vision is to create management and personnel development solutions for the 21st century Naval Aviation Enterprise workforce—our Total Force."<sup>43</sup> These words, from *Naval Aviation Vision 2020*, emphasize the point. The aviation community enterprise, hailed as a standard

for other communities to emulate, is directing its efforts almost exclusively toward personnel and equipment readiness. The technical and tactical demands of aviation are so burdensome that this approach is easily justifiable. The personnel training requirements are proportionately extensive. It is logical for community enterprises to manage the training elements specific to their communities.

However, leadership and the development continuum required to cultivate it are not community specific and should not be subordinated to the agendas of service subcultures. For too long the Navy focused on missions and leadership in the context of each of its communities' parochial views. Now, reacting to joint requirements, the Navy is in danger of neglecting the fundamental processes necessary to develop leaders. Before the Navy can realize its ambition to create joint leaders, it must achieve competence in developing fully qualified *naval* leaders. This requires a dimension of intraservice competence not present in the current force and not achievable under the current vision.

New naval officers today, upon completing accession programs, enter their community enterprises, where for the next fifteen to twenty years they have no opportunity to interact in institutional training or educational experiences with other naval officers (aside from the select minority who attend the Naval War College or Command Leadership School). Until they reach the rank of captain, naval officers are largely defined by their tactical and technical competencies. Certainly, the demands and priorities of the individual communities justify placing a premium on leadership within the context of the warfighting system. The core culture and competency of officers, the ones they are rewarded for cultivating, are linked first to their communities, only secondarily to the Navy. The 2001 *Executive Review of Navy Training* recognized the challenge the Navy's cultural stovepipes:

Training problems are cumbersome to deal with due to fragmentation at the OPNAV level. . . . [T]he Fleet CINC(s), CNET, and the SYSCOMs all own and operate commands that conduct training in major Fleet concentration areas. For the most part, these commands act as independent agencies, each using its resources to conduct training in support of its own mission. Although these training facilities are seldom fully utilized, the Navy rarely looks across the different commands to accomplish training missions.<sup>44</sup>

Admiral Walt Doran, USN (Ret.), addressing a joint assembly of students at the Naval War College in 2007, characterized the priorities facing junior and field-grade (generally O-4 through O-6) officers: "At the tactical level, your responsibility is to learn your craft. If you are a naval officer, you are expected to learn how to fight your ship or fight your aircraft or fight your sub. As an Air Force officer, you must know how to fight your jet. As a Marine or Army Officer,



you must know how to lead your troops.”<sup>45</sup> Admiral Doran’s comments were intended to comment on the pressures placed on officers to master the tactical skills of their respective services. Yet his comments illustrate a powerful difference in service cultures and competencies. At the tactical level, Air Force and Navy officers are focused almost exclusively on their *machines*; Marine and Army officers are focused on *leadership*—the fundamental expectation is that every officer is a leader of soldiers or Marines. The common measure of officers’ value to their institutions is their astuteness in wielding the instrument of leadership to accomplish the mission. The common, unifying competency of the ground forces revolves around the individual weapon system manifested in the soldier. Leadership is the cornerstone of execution.

The commitment to professional excellence as soldiers and Marines is evidenced in the extensive continuum of training and educational opportunities conspicuously woven into each officer’s career. Further, an extensive leadership development continuum is not a distinct training domain but the foundation of each training and education opportunity. A fundamental and revealing difference between the Navy’s leadership development system and that of the Army, Air Force, and Marines is the relative cultural emphasis on integrated leadership and professional military education. The Army, Marine Corps, and Air Force have made PME and leadership education integral parts of their career tracks. Their cultures and career models support mandatory, recurrent schoolhouse experiences. In this way they not only foster leadership development along with tactical military development but provide forums that integrate officers of all communities and nurture service competency. In the Navy there is no parallel institutional experience. Aviators, surface warriors, and submariners all keep to their own unique career paths, their individual priorities tied to the technical and tactical demands of their community enterprises. Outside the “luck of the draw” of individual operational assignments, the first intraservice institutional opportunity occurs only when naval officers are eligible for resident war college seats; even then, only a handful are afforded the opportunity to attend.

## EDUCATION, TRAINING, AND LEADERSHIP

Training and education are distinct aspects of officer development. They are not mutually exclusive, nor are they synonymous. Education, integrated with training, experience, and self-development, forms the basis of the chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff vision for officer development. These same four ingredients are essential to the cultivation of leadership. The Navy acknowledges the intrinsic value of education but falls into the trap of attempting to quantify its return on education investment, by applying methodology more appropriate to measuring training objectives. The *Officer Professional Military Education Policy*



clearly makes a distinction between education and training: “In its purest form, education fosters breadth of view, diverse perspectives and critical analysis, abstract reasoning, comfort with ambiguity and uncertainty, and innovative thinking. . . . This contrasts with training, which focuses on the instruction of personnel to enhance their capacity to perform specific functions and tasks.”<sup>46</sup>

Plainly described, training attempts to achieve a measurable skill, and education seeks to mature a way of thinking. The Navy’s tradition of lumping training and education organizations into the same command structure makes it difficult to distinguish the unique requirements and outcomes of each endeavor. Similarly, the Navy’s repeated attempts to correct perceived deficiencies in its training and education system focus on blended solutions. A principal aim of the Navy’s “revolution in training” has been to identify the competencies associated with each job in the Navy in order to refine and systematically engineer measurable training programs to produce readiness. Education too is viewed in this vein. The Commander, Naval Education and Training Command, discussing the implications of the “revolution in training” for fleet readiness, has emphasized the significance of cost savings, related in terms of time to competency. According to Vice Admiral J. Kevin Moran,

With the prevalent time-is-money mentality in the Navy, getting sailors back to their posts quickly is a key goal of the educational initiative. This means a minimal amount of time in our part of the organization. Time spent in a classroom comes out of . . . the individual’s account. . . . That’s a bundle of money. If I reduce the time to train, I save the Navy money and can return that money to “big” Navy to do other things with. Over the five years of the defense plan, I owe the CNO \$2.2 billion back out of those individuals’ accounts.<sup>47</sup>

It is difficult to imagine the Navy’s new business enterprise leaders justifying the intrinsic value of education in terms of the obligation to “return money to ‘big’ Navy” (that is, in effect, to the Navy’s operational forces). In a fiscally constrained environment, valuing education above weapon systems and operational training may appear even more difficult. This is perhaps part of the reason the Navy has been remiss in filling service-college seats, including at its own Naval War College. Although recent statistics indicate that joint professional military education opportunities are on the rise, they also paint a bleak picture of the Navy’s success to date in PME generally: as of May 2007, only 48 percent of Navy officers in pay grades O-5 and O-6 had completed JPME Phase I, and only 21 percent were JPME II qualified.<sup>48</sup> At the same time, there is currently no mechanism to track in-residence attendance at service colleges, and community support of attendance at the resident courses has been traditionally weak.

The faculty at the Marine Corps University pointed out that the Navy's unwillingness to fill their seats at their sister Service PME schools with credible officers from their operational line communities undermines the educational experience of all the students. Not only do the Navy officers not attain the PME, but their fellow officers in the other Services miss an opportunity to gain insight into naval warfare at sea, under the sea and in the air.<sup>49</sup>

To distinguish the source of JPME, a naval officer's records must be individually screened for entries under "Service Schools Attended." Aside from cumbersome record reviews or culls of registrars' records, there is no qualification discriminator, no quick reference, to determine which officers studied in residence and which earned JPME credit through distance-learning programs.<sup>50</sup>

The challenge for the Navy Personnel Command is even starker when it comes to leadership education. Despite CNO-directed "mandatory attendance" in the Navy's leadership training courses, the Center for Naval Leadership struggles to fill its seats, and the number of line officers attending is abysmally low—though the curriculum has been cut in half, in a patent attempt to boost attendance.<sup>51</sup> Further, a call to the Officer Assignments branch at the Navy Personnel Command would likely reveal that few officer detailers are aware of the existence of a formal requirement to send officers to CNL-taught courses, or even of the CNL itself.<sup>52</sup> Moreover, there is currently neither oversight of the Navy's leadership continuum nor a mechanism to track or compel attendance. In the current system, each community is left to determine for itself the value and usefulness of leadership education and training.

## THE NAVY'S VISION OF PROFESSIONAL MILITARY EDUCATION

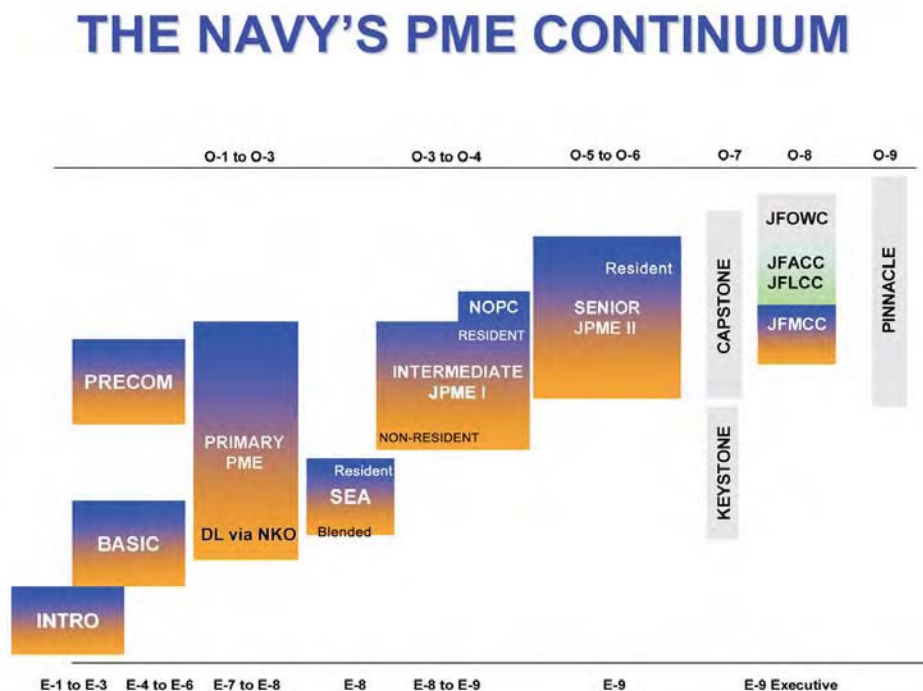
Admiral Mullen's predecessor as Chief of Naval Operations, Admiral Vern Clark, identified the elements of a PME continuum, and in so doing he established the Navy's fundamental paradigm of officer professional development:<sup>53</sup>

$$\text{PME} = \text{NPME} + \text{JPME} + \text{Leadership} + \text{Advanced Education}.$$

As we have seen, professional military education is the cumulative result of service-specific education (NPME), joint education (JPME), leadership development (education), and graduate-level education. However, the Navy's latest model for PME development fails to reflect these fundamentals.

The Navy's PME continuum is designed to achieve the goals established in the CNO's *Guidance* and the *Vision for Joint Officer Development*. According to Rear Admiral Jacob L. Shuford, President of the Naval War College and executive agent of the Navy's PME continuum, "The Navy's PME Continuum provides a succession of educational opportunities designed to prepare each individual for challenges at the tactical, operational, and then strategic levels of war. . . . The

**FIGURE 2**  
**THE NAVY'S PME CONTINUUM, AUGUST 2004**



Source: Brief to CNO, August 2004.

continuum's key elements of PME are leadership, professionalism, military studies including naval and joint warfare, and national, maritime, and global security.”<sup>54</sup>

Admiral Mullen expects the Navy to take the lead in development of joint leaders. Accordingly, “the Navy will do so for its officers and senior enlisted through a mix of Joint and Navy-specific Professional Military Education (PME), Joint and naval experience, and Joint and naval individual training. *PME is at the heart of this process; the schoolhouses are lynchpin to producing the effects that I seek.*”<sup>55</sup> However, when we examine the Navy's PME Continuum, we find that the foundational element of Navy professional military training, “Primary PME,” is not tied to a schoolhouse but rather is relegated to distance learning, through the Internet. Moreover, there is no mechanism for leadership education or training. The Navy's model speaks to the joint education requirements established in the OPMEP but falls well short of the intent of fully developing naval leaders.

#### RECURRING FAILURE TO ALIGN TRAINING AND EDUCATION INSTITUTIONS

In October 2000, the formal Executive Review of Navy Training convened to examine the Navy's training program—specifically, to align organizational structure more closely, incorporate best practices and technology used in the civil

sector, and recommend a continuum based on lifelong learning and career professional development.<sup>56</sup> Many of the recommendations included in its report, *Revolution in Training: Executive Review of Navy Training*, are identical to those made almost a decade earlier by the Zero-Based Training and Education Review. Completed in 1993, the Zero-Based Review argued that a central problem with leadership training was a lack of standardization or central control, whereby individual communities were being allowed to define their own priorities and methods for providing leadership training.<sup>57</sup> Among its findings were the following references to the leadership continuum:

- A low proportion (38 percent) of Navy officers receiving NAVLEAD (leadership) training, primarily surface and submarine officers at the division- and department-head levels
- A nonsequential, nonprogressive, and disjointed education and training continuum, resulting from differing perceptions about leadership requirements across communities
- Absence of a single authority responsible for program management, resources, and curriculum control
- Absence of an assessment system for individual/curriculum effectiveness
- Lack of subject-matter experts for the development of curriculum.<sup>58</sup>

Not only was the continuum inadequate, but the staffing of its institutional elements reflected the low value assigned to education. Nonetheless, and despite these findings and the *Revolution in Training* report, the same complaints and problems are clearly evident today. In fact, according to Professor Richard Suttie of the Naval War College, the Navy has been the beneficiary of nearly a hundred such reviews since 1919, and 80 percent of their recommendations for corrective action have been the same.<sup>59</sup> The repetitiveness of these findings and the persistence of the need for such reviews, each followed by a brief eruption of action, indicates a doctrinal failure of the Navy's system. The service's approach has not been adequately focused on identifying an enduring continuum.

## THE ROLE OF DOCTRINE

A fundamental but missing ingredient is naval doctrine. It is a running joke in the halls of the Naval War College that what little doctrine the Navy has it ignores in favor of operational flexibility. The Navy does in fact have formal doctrinal manuals (known, straightforwardly, as Naval Doctrine Publications), a series running from NDP 1, *Naval Warfare*, through NDP 6, *Naval Command and Control*. However, these documents have not been updated since they were first published over a decade ago. It is significant that NDP 3, *Naval Operations*,

has yet to be published and that there is no doctrine addressing naval leadership at all.

Moreover, even the formal naval doctrine that physically exists fails to achieve the purpose declared in its own pages: “The success of an organized military force is associated directly with the validity of its doctrine. Doctrine is the starting point from which we develop solutions and options. . . . Doctrine is conceptual—a shared way of thinking. . . . To be useful, doctrine must be uniformly known and understood.”<sup>60</sup> There is no mechanism, formal or informal, to ensure that naval doctrine is known or understood. Unlike those of the other services, which place a premium on indoctrinating members on the value and content of doctrine, naval tradition eschews doctrine.

Air Force Doctrine Document 1-1, *Leadership and Force Development*, carefully articulates the Air Force’s vision and priorities for leadership development. The Chief of Staff makes clear in his foreword, “This document is *the* Air Force statement of leadership principles and force development, enabled by education and training, providing a framework for action ensuring our Airmen can become effective leaders.”<sup>61</sup> Similarly, in Marine Corps Warfare Publication 6-11, *Leading Marines*, the first sentences of the Commandant’s foreword are, “The most important responsibility in our Corps is leading Marines. If we expect Marines to lead and if we expect Marines to follow, we must provide the education of the heart and of the mind to win on the battlefield and in the barracks, in war and in peace.”<sup>62</sup> For its part, Field Manual 6-22, *Army Leadership: Competent, Confident, and Agile*, is the Army’s “keystone field manual on leadership. It establishes leadership doctrine and fundamental principles for all officers. . . . Leaders must be committed to lifelong learning to remain relevant and ready during a career of service to the Nation.”<sup>63</sup>

These leadership doctrines establish the cornerstones of their respective services’ entire concepts of leadership and leader development. Each formally recognizes the interdependent and essential ingredients of education and training. In view of the considerable role doctrine has played in establishing and supporting the Army, Marine Corps, and Air Force officer development continua, it is indefensible that the Navy’s process continues to languish without a similar guiding document. The Navy is the only service without leadership doctrine.

## THE NAVY’S CURRENT LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT COMPENDIUM

The Navy’s leadership-development philosophy is rooted in cultivation of leadership competency through operational experience, anchored solidly in a fundamental cultural bias toward “on-the-job training.” As clearly evidenced in survey data collected by the Naval War College’s Stockdale Group, experience

and observation of others are the two most important factors in learning naval leadership.<sup>64</sup> This reliance on experiential leadership development, however, has impeded commitment to institutionalized, dedicated leadership training and education. For nearly a hundred years, the Navy has struggled to define its method of formal leadership development meaningfully. A relatively recent attempt, General Order 21 of 1958, laid down a unifying definition of naval leadership and ordered commanding officers to inculcate leadership training in their commands.<sup>65</sup> This model of leadership development is further endorsed in the classic commanding officer's "bible," *Command at Sea*. Under the heading of "Leadership Training," commanding officers are admonished to spearhead the leadership training of their officers. The U.S. Naval Academy, they are told, is a primary resource of leadership materials: "All USNA graduates have had extensive grounding in leadership and can be used as instructors."<sup>66</sup> It further goes on to describe seven readily identifiable categories (competencies) of leadership: "Personal Characteristics, Moral Leadership, Gentlemanly Conduct, Personal Relations with Seniors, Personal Relations with Juniors, Technique of Counseling, the Role of the Officer in Training."<sup>67</sup> Throughout, and consistent with the traditional construct of the sea service, responsibility for officer leadership development rests solely with the ship's commanding officer.

The early 1970s witnessed the creation of a formal two-week course titled Leadership Management Training. In 1974, Admiral Holloway, as Chief of Naval Operations, directed a formal review of all leadership training. Its recommendations included a serious need for a system of leadership training. To create one, the Navy solicited input from several civilian contractors, ultimately selecting the competency-based approach proposed by McBer and Company. McBer's system built on a series of leadership courses, which evolved into the Navy's Leadership and Management Education Training program, already mentioned, in 1979.<sup>68</sup> The LMET curriculum was initially structured around sixteen leadership competencies grouped into five "skill areas." A subsequent study conducted by McBer distilled the model to thirteen core competencies organized in three subareas: People, Relationships, and Activities.<sup>69</sup> The courses were directed variously at commanding officers, executive officers, department heads, division officers, chief petty officers, and senior petty officers.<sup>70</sup> The system was transformed again in the early 1990s, with the addition of a one-week NAVLEAD course.

In 1994, the Navy concluded another comprehensive review of the LMET/NAVLEAD process and issued a press release announcing the establishment of a formal continuum directed at the cultivation of leadership at every level of the Navy, from entry through the grade of admiral:

The Navy has recently approved the development and resourcing of a Navy Leadership Education and Training Continuum which will provide sailors with a systematic program of leadership training throughout their careers. The continuum . . . is designed to provide formal, consistent and progressive training to all Navy members at key points in their careers. Its goal is to prepare Navy leaders for the future by making leadership training a continuous process.<sup>71</sup>

In a further demonstration of renewed commitment to a formal, institutionalized process of leadership development, in 1997, CNO required formal leadership training for all hands: “Attendance and successful completion of the appropriate leadership training course (LTC) is MANDATORY for all hands at specific career milestones. Leadership training begins at accession training . . . and continues with LTC attendance and other professional/military training throughout a Sailor’s career.”<sup>72</sup> The CNO’s order was a critical link between the Navy’s new vision of a leadership continuum and its execution. One of its ultimate results was creation of the Center for Naval Leadership, the Navy’s “center of excellence” for leadership development.

Today, the CNL’s catalogue of leadership development courses lists six officer-development courses. To date, however, only two are fully developed and being taught to the fleet at the CNL’s twenty-three sites. Moreover, a decade after the establishment of a formal continuum and an infrastructure to support it, little progress has been made in solidifying the process by which personnel are assigned to attend. The Navy’s organizational hierarchy further complicates implementation; in the absence of doctrine, or a governing manpower vision, embracing education, training, experience, and self-development, there is no core continuum to guide naval leadership development in an officer’s career. Each element in the current organization is a snapshot, designed to provide just-in-time education in functional roles about to be assumed.

There is in fact a glaring lack of a formal, institutionalized, and linked continuum to cultivate leadership from accession through flag. The array of officer development institutions existing today resembles a child’s building blocks strewn across the playroom floor:

- Accessions: U.S. Naval Academy, Reserve Officer Training Corps, Officer Training Command
- Leadership training: Center for Naval Leadership
- PME: Naval War College (College of Command and Staff, College of Naval Warfare)
- Graduate education: Naval Postgraduate School



- Flag development: Executive Learning Officer/Flag University, in addition to CAPSTONE, KEYSTONE, PINNACLE, and the Joint Force Maritime Component Commander course
- Web-based training and education: Navy Knowledge Online (NKO), including Primary PME.

This list does not include the myriad of technical schools and warfare-community centers of excellence dedicated to the cultivation of tactical acumen. There are implied relationships between many of the individual elements; however, the organizations listed do not fit into a structured model of officer development. They are not aligned vertically or horizontally to integrate or coordinate curriculums. Neither is there any alignment of funding, manpower resources, program management, or curriculum development, or, most importantly, any vehicle to direct an officer's path through the developmental process or reward progress. For example, the Naval Education and Training Command, despite its title, does not own the Navy's three vanguard educational institutions—the Naval Academy, Naval War College, and Naval Postgraduate School.

The services are accountable for rewarding excellence in achievement of professional military education competencies; accordingly, they must be able to track and assess each officer's progression through the development process. The Navy lacks the capability to do so. More broadly, its current process, including Admiral Mullen's vision for a PME continuum, cannot achieve the desired outcomes. Unless the appropriate changes are effected, the Navy's program will undoubtedly continue to spiral in recurring cycles of Review, Recommend, React, Review, Recommend—and Repeat.

## NAVY OFFICER PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

In the spring of 1919, Captain (later Fleet Admiral) Ernest King was ordered to Annapolis to reopen the Naval Postgraduate School. In August the following year, the U.S. Naval Institute *Proceedings* published "Report and Recommendations of a Board Appointed by the Bureau of Navigation, Regarding the Instruction and Training of Line Officers," coauthored by King and two of his peers, Captains Dudley Knox and W. S. Pye.<sup>73</sup> The report of this group, commonly known as the Knox-King-Pye Board, held that, it being "impractical and impossible to equip an officer for the whole period of his Service with a working knowledge of a multiplicity of arts, industries, and sciences, whose advance is continuous and progressive, it [thus] becomes necessary to provide for his further instruction and training at recurring periods."<sup>74</sup> The report defined the key phases of a naval officer's career as:

Inferior subordinate—division officer



Superior subordinate—head of department

Commanding officer—command of a single ship

Flag officer—command of group of ships.<sup>75</sup>

Based on these phases, the board recommended four periods of officer instruction, beginning with the Naval Academy and ending with the Senior War College at the rank of captain. Between these extremes the report recommended the creation of a one-year “General Line Course” before accession to the “Superior subordinate” phase, and establishment of a Junior War College to prepare lieutenant commanders for command.<sup>76</sup> The report went on to propose how these courses might be best integrated into an officer’s career progression as a continuum of learning and education.

These recommendations led to the establishment of the Junior War College in 1923 and the General Line Course in 1927. The Knox-King-Pye group of 1919 was the first of the seventy-seven significant boards, task forces, and panels convened that, as we have seen, the Navy has set to reexamine its officer development and education system. The thrust of their cumulative recommendations and conclusions is a formal continuum of professional military education, aligned under an executive agent with both the power and resources to supervise execution, compel compliance, and ensure enduring institutionalization within Navy culture. Yet despite the best efforts of so many flag officers, PhD’s, and paid consultants, and even Congress, the Navy’s PME continuum today is less credible and less meaningful than it was over three-quarters of a century ago.

#### MPTE ALIGNMENT

The CNO’s 2006 guidance announced the alignment and consolidation of manpower, personnel, training, and education (MPTE) under the leadership of the Navy’s Chief of Naval Personnel, Vice Admiral John Harvey. The MPTE business strategy is to anticipate the fleet’s needs, identifying required personnel capabilities and applying capabilities in an “agile, cost-effective manner.”<sup>77</sup> As the head of the Navy’s “MPTE Domain,” Vice Admiral Harvey is responsible for aligning and integrating all Navy personnel management, training, and education programs, from recruiting through retirement. His strategy focuses prominently on developing twenty-first-century leaders; though there is no mention of a strategy for leadership development, one of its critical elements is formulation of a “Navy Education Strategy.” Vice Admiral Harvey testified before Congress in February 2007 that the Navy had studied career progression to lay the foundation for the education strategy and that there would be another study later in 2007.<sup>78</sup>

According to MPTE's "Strategic Vision and Priorities Brief," the planned organizational architecture will emphasize measurable competency outcomes and training measures of performance:

1.2 *Competency Management*. Define, describe and manage Navy's work and workforce by the observable, measurable pattern of knowledge, skills, abilities, behaviors and other characteristics an individual needs to perform successfully. . . .

4.3 *Domain Performance Management*. Be a performance-based organization that sets clear expectations against measurable objectives, enables performance, institutes accountability and rewards success.<sup>79</sup>

There is also a call for an "Education Strategy and Policy Alignment"; however, there is no specific tasking or direction involving the Navy's current educational institutions. In any case, significant action is in abeyance pending the "extensive data gathering, model building, and data analysis" involved in the planned follow-on study.<sup>80</sup>

According to Vice Admiral Harvey, the priorities and focus areas identified in CNP's *Guidance 2007* are aligned with the CNO's guidance, "with special emphasis on taking ownership of CNO's priority to Develop 21st Century Leaders."<sup>81</sup> Despite this "special emphasis," there is no obvious effort in or reference to formal leadership development.<sup>82</sup> The Navy's leadership development continuum is not among CNP's six strategic goals, nor is it a task assigned in the MPTE initiatives and objectives framework.

## NECESSITY FOR CHANGE: RECOMMENDED ACTIONS

The Navy acknowledges that it must change in order to adapt to the demands of the twenty-first century. Nine major studies of the Navy's training establishment have generated five major reorganizations since 1971.<sup>83</sup> The language in the most recent comprehensive review, *Revolution in Training*, is evidence that the Navy fully understands the comprehensive nature of the change now required. Further, the report indicates, the Navy fully appreciates the necessary dynamics in organizational and cultural change. Nonetheless, much of *Revolution in Training* is merely a restatement of preceding reports.

As we have seen, the other services already have integrated processes to achieve the goals the Navy still seeks. The Army, Air Force, and Marine Corps have documents that govern their leadership development paradigms, as well as mature mechanisms to develop service competent, joint-qualified officers. There are important differences in the organizations and cultures, but the confluence of competency rankings revealed in the Stockdale survey instrument clearly indicates that leadership at the operational level is not service-centric. If the point is to produce the most capable operational leaders, perhaps the Navy should examine and incorporate the best practices of its peers.

### *Leadership Doctrine*

The Navy must determine a path for leadership development, one that includes leadership training and education, joint professional military education, and Navy professional military education. Navy leadership and PME must be defined in terms broader than the typically myopic focus of the “enterprises.” Leadership development and the Navy’s education priorities must be articulated in terms of Navy leadership development and not that of aviation, surface warfare, submarines, or the numerous other community associations. In the absence of leadership doctrine, each enterprise is left to chart its own course, set its own career priorities and milestones, and establish its own concept of officer development. The insular nature of each community dilutes the strength of the naval service as a whole. Naval leadership doctrine must be written to establish a leadership development and education continuum that complements, but is not subordinate to, the tactical training demands of the individual communities.

### *A General Line Officer Course*

The current strategy to implement Primary PME through a seventy-hour distance-learning, Web-based protocol is inadequate to equip naval officers for the twenty-first century. As a fundamental building block of the CJCS *Vision for Joint Officer Development*, Primary PME must be the bedrock of both leadership and service competence. The JOD and the *Capstone Concept for Joint Operations* rely on the services’ ability to provide fully qualified colonels and captains. The Navy has established institutional competence standards for naval officers only within community specialties or subspecialties. It has yet, therefore, to perceive intraservice competence as an essential stepping-stone to interservice competence—that is, to jointness.

At the same time, the Navy must address its largely defunct leadership development continuum. To recall the words of Rear Admiral Shuford, “The continuum’s key elements of PME are leadership, professionalism, military studies.” The Navy now has an opportunity to integrate naval military education and leadership-development courses into a comprehensive system of professional development; such integration is an essential strength of leadership development programs of the other services. Further, by bringing together officers from across stovepipe boundaries in an academic environment, the Navy would be better able to effect the essential cultural changes identified in the *Revolution in Training* report.

The simple issuance of leadership doctrine is insufficient. The Navy routinely promulgates doctrinal papers—*Naval Operating Concept for Joint Operations*, . . . *From the Sea, Forward* . . . *from the Sea*, and *Naval Operations Concept 2006* are all examples—but there is no adequate system to institutionalize such

visions in the service culture. A resident General Line Officer's course, implemented as Primary PME, would afford officers a *naval* perspective, unconstrained by community or enterprise. It would inculcate cultural change, align priorities, and develop leaders who are naval officers in the fullest sense, prepared for the challenges and demands of joint service. A new paradigm is required to reestablish common naval culture; resident PME supports that paradigm.

#### *A Navy Education Command*

Much effort has been expended to align the Navy's disparate education programs, predicated on formulation of a coherent education strategy, alignment of educational organizations, empowerment of an education enterprise, and assignment of a single cognizant executive agent. Ignoring the recurrent recommendations, the Navy's MPTE consolidation forces educational programs and institutions to compete with manpower, personnel, and training priorities. Formal command relationships, resource allocations, and the roles and responsibilities of individual educational institutions remain unresolved. In this morass, the Center for Naval Leadership, the executive agent for leadership education and training, is left to fend for itself.

The Navy recognizes education as a strategic investment, but if it is to realize a return, it must accept that dividends realized from education cannot be assessed against the metrics used for training. To achieve a meaningful transformation

**FIGURE 3**  
**U.S. MARINE CORPS EDUCATION COMMAND PROGRAMS**

<p><u>MCU Degree Programs</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Marine Corps War College</li> <li>• Command and Staff College</li> <li>• School of Advanced Warfighting</li> <li>• Compliance Certification</li> <li>• Quality Enhancement Plan (QEP)</li> </ul>	<p><u>Academic Support</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Alfred M. Gray Research Center</li> <li>• Historical Division</li> <li>• National Museum of the Marine Corps</li> <li>• Marine Corps University Foundation</li> <li>• International Military Students Office</li> <li>• MCU Surveys</li> <li>• Academic Chairs</li> </ul>
<p><u>Professional Military Education</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• PME Policy/PME Order</li> <li>• Marine Corps Professional Reading Program</li> <li>• Additional resources: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Enlisted PME Information</li> <li>- Officer PME Information</li> <li>- Reserve Officer PME</li> <li>- College of Continuing Education</li> <li>- Marine Corps Institute</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	<p><u>MCU Schools &amp; Programs</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Professional Development Division</li> <li>• Lejeune Leadership Institute</li> <li>• Expeditionary Warfare School</li> <li>• School of MAGTF Logistics</li> <li>• Senior Leader Development Program (SLDP)</li> <li>• Commanders Program</li> <li>• Enlisted PME (EPME)</li> </ul>

Source: Marine Corps University, [www.mcu.usmc.mil](http://www.mcu.usmc.mil).

and the success that has escaped previous restructuring attempts, the Navy must establish a “Navy Education Enterprise” on a par with the warfare enterprises.<sup>84</sup> The Education Command/Marine Corps University has already achieved this standing within the Marine Corps. Advanced education, Marine Corps PME, JPME, and leadership development are all aligned, resourced, and empowered within its architecture. Its mission statement directly reflects the Navy’s own need—a command that would “develop, deliver, and evaluate professional military education and training through resident and distance education programs to prepare leaders to meet the challenges of the national security environment.”<sup>85</sup>

### EVERYTHING STARTS AND ENDS WITH LEADERSHIP

*As the youth progresses onward to mature manhood, he reaps a harvest from experience, he gleans much knowledge from his studies, he learns concisely what the laws of the seaman require, and the rules of the art of war demand. . . . But who is there to tell him that toward the end of your career you cannot pick up new tools and use them with the dexterity of the expert unless you have spent a lifetime with them, tested the temper of their steel, and made them a part of your life’s equipment*

REAR ADMIRAL WILLIAM PRATT, LEADERSHIP

In 1934, when Rear Admiral Pratt published these thoughts in the Naval Institute *Proceedings*, the Navy’s leadership development envisioned the four phases of an officer’s career that had been listed in the Knox-King-Pye report of 1919. Accordingly, the Navy recognized the requirement to prepare its officers in their professional growth with respect to leadership and professional military education at each of these critical stages. There have been tremendous contextual changes since Rear Admiral Pratt’s article, but the same four stages of officer development remain central to the Navy’s continuum of PME. The Navy PME model institutionalized between the world wars has served the Navy and the nation very well indeed, and it is congruent with the *Vision for Joint Officer Development*, written three generations later.

The current focus on operational leadership and operational competencies is appropriate, then, but only if the system of officer development it serves is otherwise robust. But is it? On the cover of the 21 May 2007 *Navy Times*, above (and overshadowing) a photograph of the Navy’s prospective fifth concurrently serving combatant commander, was an ominous “teaser”—“4 COs Fired in 4 Weeks.”<sup>86</sup> By the following Monday morning, two more commanding officers had been relieved.<sup>87</sup>

There is a leadership crisis in the Navy, but it is not at the operational level. The real crisis exists at the tactical level, and it is a consequence of a misaligned,

fragmented, and marginalized system of officer professional development. The Navy's recent attempts to transform officer development from the top down have fallen well short. The Navy should direct its best efforts to institutionalize a leadership and professional development continuum that focuses on the bulk of its officer corps, not only the cohorts well into their careers. If "everything starts and ends with leadership," the Navy's paradigm of leadership cultivation must start at the beginning.

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#### NOTES

1. Based on author's research and conversations with Professor Richard Suttie, Captain, USN (Ret.), Naval War College, College of Naval Leadership, Newport, R.I., 21 May 2007. According to Professor Suttie's documented research, seventy-seven studies, boards, and reports have been conducted since 1919 on the subject of education and naval officer development. The author's research indicates an additional thirteen studies and reports address the subject of leadership development.
2. *CNO Guidance for 2007: Focus on Execution* (Washington, D.C.: Navy Staff, 2 February 2007), p. 1.
3. Ernest King and Walter Whitehill, *Fleet Admiral King: A Naval Record* (New York: W. W. Norton, 1952), p. 150.
4. Adm. Michael Mullen to the Vice Chief of Naval Operations, "Joint Officer Development," draft memorandum, circa 2004, p. 1 [emphasis original].
5. *Ibid.*, p. 2.
6. The Chief of Naval Personnel (CNP), Vice Admiral Harvey, is also the Navy's Deputy Chief of Naval Operations for the MPTE Domain.
7. The Stockdale Group definition of *operational leadership*. This definition was developed during a directed elective at the Naval War College, College of Naval Warfare, 2007. The definition was subsequently promulgated and validated through 107 survey responses from flag and general officers.
8. *Capstone Concept for Joint Operations*, version 2 (Washington, D.C.: Joint Staff, August 2005) [hereafter CCJO], p. 1.
9. *Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff Vision for Joint Officer Development* (Washington, D.C.: Joint Staff, November 2005) [hereafter JOD], p. 1.
10. Mullen, "Joint Officer Development," p. 2.
11. JOD, p. 5.
12. CCJO, p. 1.
13. JOD, p. 2.
14. The Caliber Associates study is described more completely below. Caliber's report, like the Joint Leadership Competency Model it proposed, has yet to be adopted or endorsed by the Joint Staff.
15. JOD, p. 2.
16. *Ibid.*, p. 5.
17. *Ibid.*, p. 9.
18. "Officer Professional Military Education Policy," CJCS Instruction 1800.01C, 22 December 2005 [hereafter OPMEP], p. A-1.
19. *Ibid.*, p. E-D-3.
20. JOD, p. 3.
21. OPMEP, p. E-D-3.
22. National Defense University, *Strategic Leadership: Leading Transformation and Change in the Information Age*, Syllabus (Abbreviated) AY 2006–2007 (Washington, D.C.: Industrial College of the Armed Forces, n.d.), annex D.
23. William P. Mack and Albert H. Konetzni, Jr., *Command at Sea*, 4th ed. (Annapolis, Md.: Naval Institute Press, 1982), pp. 143–45.
24. Toraiheeb Al Harbi, "Navy Definitions of Leadership and LMET/NAVLEAD Competency Clusters Compared to Selected Leadership Theories" (master's thesis, Naval

- Postgraduate School, Monterey, California, 1995), pp. 58–61.
25. *Ibid.*, pp. 64–69.
  26. Conversation with Professor John Meyer, Captain, USN (Ret.), Naval War College, College of Naval Leadership, Newport, R.I., 22 March 2007.
  27. This definition was presented in a brief during a visit to the Center for Naval Leadership [hereafter CNL], Virginia Beach, Virginia, 27 March 2007.
  28. Conversations during CNL visit, 27 March 2007. When asked for reference information supporting the “comprehensive research” conducted to develop the new Navy Leadership Competency Model, CNL’s staff indicated that there was no empirical evidence. The author was encouraged to review the Office of Personnel Management competency model for the Senior Executive Service, which bears an unmistakable resemblance to the Navy Leadership Competency Model.
  29. Based on comparison of the LMET curriculum and current CNL division-officer and department-head curriculums. While the organization is somewhat restructured in the CNL courses, the content and objectives are largely the same as in the predecessor courses taught in the LMET curriculum.
  30. JOD, p. 2.
  31. CCJO, p. v.
  32. Caliber Associates, *Identification of the Competencies Required of Joint Force Leaders* (Fairfax, Va.: 2006), p. 5.
  33. *Ibid.*, p. 6.
  34. Of note, while all respondents were in grades O-6 through O-9 or senior civilians, the overwhelming preponderance of SMEs were U.S. Army officers: Army 39 percent, Air Force 24 percent, Navy 15 percent, Marine Corps 13 percent, and Coast Guard 9 percent. Additionally, the Army’s SMEs represented six of nine combatant commanders, compared to the Navy’s three of nine.
  35. JOD, p. 2.
  36. Cdr. Vanessa Wyndham, USN, interview by the author, CNL, 27 March 2007.
  37. George Reed et al., “Mapping the Route of Leader Education: Caution Ahead,” *Parameters* 34, no. 3 (Autumn 2004), p. 53.
  38. *Ibid.* According to Reed et al., “double-loop learning” requires a multiple-lens strategy to evolve the organization’s approach to learning into one focused on applying different frameworks, based on context. “Single-loop learning,” in contrast, focuses on finding solutions to problems framed in a singular context, without a holistic appreciation of the factors contributing to the original problem.
  39. Lt. Col. Norm Cooling, USMC, “An Analysis of the U.S. Marine Corps Officer Leadership Development Continuum” (working collection document presented to the Stockdale Group, College of Naval Warfare, Newport, Rhode Island, 6 May 2007), p. 1.
  40. Mack and Konetzni, *Command at Sea*, p. xi.
  41. Rear Adm. Jacob L. Shuford, USN, “Commanding at the Operational Level,” U.S. Naval Institute *Proceedings* (May 2007), p. 24. According to Rear Admiral Shuford, only 20 percent of Navy flag officers were graduates of resident senior service colleges as of January 2007, up from only 12 percent in 2004.
  42. The Navy’s “enterprise” concept was first introduced by Admiral Clark in 2001 as a vehicle supporting the Navy’s transformation into an efficient and effective twenty-first-century fighting force by refining organizational alignment, operating requirements, and reinvestment strategies.
  43. U.S. Navy Dept., “The Right Force: Our People,” in *Naval Aviation Vision 2020* (Washington, D.C.: Naval Aviation Enterprise, 2005), p. 108.
  44. *Revolution in Training: Executive Review of Navy Training* (Washington, D.C.: Navy Staff, 2001), p. 47.
  45. Adm. Walter Doran, USN (Ret.), discussion and interview with the Stockdale Group, 3 May 2007.
  46. OPMEP, pp. A-1, A-2.
  47. Brian Summerfield, “Vice Admiral J. Kevin Moran: Winning the Navy’s War for People,” *Chief Learning Officer*, www.clomedia.com.
  48. Author’s conversation and subsequent e-mail exchange with Ms. Barb Cusak, Pers-45J2,



- Navy Personnel Command, Bureau of Naval Personnel, 14 May 2007.
49. Cooling, "An Analysis of the U.S. Marine Corps Officer Leadership Development Continuum," p. 13.
  50. Based on author's conversations with Pers-45J1 (Schools/Waivers) and Pers-440C (Fellowships and Service College Placement), Bureau of Naval Personnel, regarding tracking of resident service college attendance and JPME, 8 May 2007.
  51. Based on author's conversations with staff personnel during CNL visit, 27 March 2007.
  52. Author's informal telephone poll of O-3 and O-4 community detailers in Pers-41 (Surface), Pers-42 (Submarine), and Pers-43 (Aviation) regarding the integration of Center for Naval Leadership's Leadership Development Courses in conjunction with career milestones and orders generation, 8 May 2007.
  53. The PME equation was presented in a brief to, and subsequently approved by, the CNO, Adm. Vern Clark, in August 2004.
  54. Shuford, "Commanding at the Operational Level," p. 28.
  55. Mullen, "Joint Officer Development," p. 1 [emphasis added].
  56. *Revolution in Training*, p. i.
  57. *Zero-Based Training and Education Review: ZBT&ER Final Report* (Washington, D.C.: Navy Staff, 1993), p. IV-4.
  58. Ibid.
  59. Conversation with Professor Richard Suttie, 21 May 2007; see note 1. Professor Suttie provided research material and reference data produced in support of Naval University (NavU) concept development.
  60. U.S. Navy Dept., *Naval Warfare*, Naval Doctrine Publication (NDP) 1 (Washington, D.C.: Navy Staff, 1994), p. ii.
  61. *Leadership and Force Development*, Air Force Doctrine Document (AFDD) 1-1 (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Air Force Dept., 18 February 2004), p. iii [emphasis original].
  62. *Leading Marines*, Marine Corps Warfare Publication (MCWP) 6-11 (Washington, D.C.: Headquarters U.S. Marine Corps, 3 January 1995), foreword.
  63. *Army Leadership: Competent, Confident, and Agile*, Field Manual (FM) 6-22 (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Army Dept., October 2006), foreword.
  64. The Naval War College established the College of Naval Leadership in 2006 as an adjunct to its two principal PME colleges. Subsequently, in the fall of 2006, the College of Naval Leadership created the Stockdale Group Advanced Research Project (ARP). The purpose of the Stockdale ARP was to conduct a critical examination of current operational leadership and to provide recommendations to the Chief of Naval Operations on how best to structure the Navy's training and education system to develop proficient and capable operational-level leaders in a continuum that builds throughout an officer's career. The Stockdale Group's research included two survey instruments designed to assess operational leadership. These two survey responses (experience and observation of others) parallel the overall U.S. (non-Navy) response.
  65. John Noel, Jr., ed., *The Bluejackets' Manual*, 16th ed. (Annapolis, Md.: Naval Institute Press, 1960), p. 549.
  66. Mack and Konetzni, *Command at Sea*, p. 143.
  67. Ibid., p. 144.
  68. Al Harbi, "Navy Definitions of Leadership and LMET/NAVLEAD Competency Clusters Compared to Selected Leadership Theories," p. 55.
  69. Ibid, p. 58.
  70. Mack and Konetzni, *Command at Sea*, p. 278.
  71. U.S. Navy Dept., "Naval Leadership Education and Training Enhanced," press release, 1994, available at Findarticles.com.
  72. Chief of Naval Operations, "Navy Leadership Continuum," NAVADMIN 189/97, naval message, date-time group 301130Z July 97, p. 3.
  73. King and Whitehill, *Fleet Admiral King*, p. 150.
  74. Ibid.
  75. Ibid.
  76. Ibid., p. 151.



77. Vice Adm. J. C. Harvey, USN, *Guidance 2007: Year of Execution* (Washington, D.C.: Office of the Chief of Naval Personnel, 2007), p. 3.
78. Vice Adm. John Harvey, Chief of Naval Personnel and Deputy Chief of Naval Operations (Manpower, Personnel, Training and Education), statement before the Subcommittee on Military Personnel of the House Committee on Armed Services, 110th Cong., 1st sess., 15 February 2007, p. 19.
79. Deputy Chief of Naval Operations for Manpower, Personnel, Training, and Education, "MPTE Strategic Vision and Priorities Brief," 25 April 2007.
80. Harvey, statement.
81. Harvey, *Guidance 2007*, p. 5.
82. Review of CNP *Guidance*, congressional testimony, and reference documents accessible through CNP's MPTE website ([www.npc.navy.mil/AboutUs/MPTE/](http://www.npc.navy.mil/AboutUs/MPTE/)) failed to reveal any MPTE plan to strengthen or align the Navy's leadership development continuum within current or future training and education strategies.
83. *Revolution in Training*, p. 49.
84. The enterprise framework comprises five "warfare enterprises" (Aviation, Undersea, Surface, Navy Expeditionary, and Net Warfare) and the "Provider Enterprise." MPTE is one of nine domains within the Provider Enterprise.
85. U.S. Marine Corps, "MCU Mission Statement," *Education Command*, available at [www.mcu.usmc.mil](http://www.mcu.usmc.mil).
86. Andrew Scutro, "4 Sacked in 4 Weeks," *Navy Times*, 21 May 2007. Vice Adm. Eric T. Olson was pictured as the prospective relief of Gen. Bryan D. Brown, USAF, at U.S. Special Operations Command. As of mid-August 2007, the other combatant commands led by Navy officers were the U.S. Central, Northern, Pacific, and Southern; see [DefenseLink.mil](http://DefenseLink.mil).
87. Zachary Peterson, "Grounding, Firing, Alleged Bar Fight Scar Sea Services," *Navy Times*, 28 May 2007.